

REMARKS

In view of the above amendments and the following remarks, reconsideration and further examination are respectfully requested.

I. Amendments to the Specification and Abstract

The specification and abstract have been reviewed and revised to improve their English grammar. No new matter has been added.

II. Amendments to the Claims

Claims 2-6 have been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer of the subject matter contained therein, and claims 7 and 8 have been amended to remove various limitations.

New claim 9 has been added.

Further, independent claim 1 has been amended to include a distinguishing feature previously recited in claim 8, which was indicated as being allowable (see below).

III. Objections

Claim 3 was objected to for various informalities. In view of the above-mentioned cancellation of claim 3, withdrawal of this objection is respectfully requested.

IV. Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 7 and 8 were identified by the Examiner as containing allowable subject matter and being allowable if rewritten in independent form to include all of the limitations of base

claim 1. The Applicants would like to thank the Examiner for this indication of allowable subject matter.

As mentioned above, independent claim 1 has been amended to include a portion of the subject matter of claim 8, which was identified by the Examiner as containing allowable subject matter. Specifically, Applicants submit that claim 1 now includes the subject matter from claim 8 that previously distinguished claim 8 from the prior art of record (i.e., claim 1 now recites that “said decoding unit notifies said stream input unit of a code length upon completion of the decoding,” as previously recited in claim 8).

Accordingly, in view of the Examiner’s indication of allowable subject matter as discussed above, it is submitted that amended independent claim 1 and claims 7-9 that depend therefrom are allowable.

V. 35 U.S.C. § 102 and § 103 Rejections

Claims 1-4 and 6 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Bakhmutsky. In addition, claim 5 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the combination of Bakhmutsky and Giorgetta. The rejections of claims 2-6 are considered moot based on their above-mentioned cancellation. Further, in view of the above-mentioned amendment of claim 1 to recite portions of claim 8 identified as being allowable, it is respectfully submitted that these rejections are no longer applicable. However, for the Examiner’s convenience, Applicants provide below a brief description of the differences between amended claim 1 and the Bakhmutsky and Giorgetta references.

Amended independent claim 1 recites a variable length decoding device including a decoding unit operable to decode different kinds of variable length codes encoded in accordance

with a plurality of encoding systems, including a stream input unit operable to input the different kinds of variable length codes, and including an interface unit operable to interface the decoding unit with the stream input unit. In addition, claim 1 recites that the stream input unit and the interface unit are commonly used in decoding the different kinds of variable length codes, and the decoding unit notifies the stream input unit of a code length upon completion of the decoding of the different kinds of variable length codes.

The above described structure required by claim 1, provides a variable-length-code decoding device that can easily support a plurality of code systems and thereby decrease a size of a circuit that decodes a plurality of the code systems.

Bakhmutsky and Giorgetta, or any combination thereof fails to disclose or suggest the above-mentioned distinguishing features as recited in independent claim 1.

Rather, Bakhmutsky merely teaches that a variable length decoder includes (i) an input circuit that receives an input digital data stream, (ii) a decoding circuit that is configurable into any selected one of a plurality of different decoding configurations, depending upon the coding standard by which the input digital data stream is coded, and (iii) a controller that determines which coding standard was employed in the coding and that configures the decoding circuit into an appropriate decoding configuration (see abstract). Specifically, Bakhmutsky teaches that State Machine 90 controls the decoding process by selecting global data types and providing the selection to length and value decoding stations (see col. 14, lines 45-48).

Thus, in view of the above, it is clear that Bakhmutsky teaches determining the type of coding standard used to code data, selecting specific data types, and then programming the decoding circuit to perform the appropriate type of decoding, but fails to disclose or suggest that the stream input unit and the interface unit are commonly used in decoding the different kinds of

variable length codes, and the decoding unit notifies the stream input unit of a code length upon completion of the decoding of the different kinds of variable length codes, as required by claim 1.

Now turning to Giorgetta, Applicants note that Giorgetta merely teaches disabling a decoder that is not in use in order to suppress power consumption (see col. 5, lines 14-18), but fails to disclose or suggest that the stream input unit and the interface unit are commonly used in decoding the different kinds of variable length codes, and the decoding unit notifies the stream input unit of a code length upon completion of the decoding of the different kinds of variable length codes, as recited in claim 1.

Therefore, because of the above-mentioned distinctions it is believed clear that claim 1 and claims 7-9 that depend therefrom would not have been obvious or result from any combination of Bakhmutsky and Giorgetta.

As mentioned above, the structure of claim 1 provides a variable-length-code decoding device that can easily support a plurality of code systems and thereby decrease a size of a circuit that decodes a plurality of the code systems. In light of the discussion above, the combination of Bakhmutsky and Giorgetta does not provide the above-mentioned benefits of the features recited by claim 1, because the combination of Bakhmutsky and Giorgetta merely results in a variable-length decoding circuit capable of decoding using various decoding methods that powers down a decoding processor when not in use.

Furthermore, there is no disclosure or suggestion in Bakhmutsky and/or Giorgetta or elsewhere in the prior art of record which would have caused a person of ordinary skill in the art to modify Bakhmutsky and/or Giorgetta to obtain the invention of independent claim 1.

Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that independent claim 1 and claims 7-9 that depend therefrom are clearly allowable over the prior art of record.

VI. Conclusion

In view of the above amendments and remarks, it is submitted that the present application is now in condition for allowance and an early notification thereof is earnestly requested. The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone to resolve any remaining issues.

Respectfully submitted,

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By 2009.09.21 16:24:02 -04'00'

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September 21, 2009